THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • THURSDAY • JUNE 13, 2024 • ₹9.00 • PAGES 22 • LATE CITY EDITION

READ SHARE FOLLOW
newindianexpress.com
facebook.com/thenewindianexpress twitter.com/newindianexpress
instagram.com/newindianexpress

STATE OF THE ECONOMY: FACTORY OUTPUT DOWN, INFLATION EASES

The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) slipped to a three-month low of 5% in April whereas retail inflation fell to 4.75% in May, shows govt data

MANUFACTURING SLUMP BLAMED FOR IIP FALL

The fall in IIP was mainly on account of poor show by the manufacturing sector, whose growth decelerated to 3.9% in April compared to 5.5% a year ago. In contrast, mining and power segments performed well, according to official data released on Wednesday. Mining output growth accelerated to 6.7% in April while power generation rose by 10.2% | P13

RETAIL INFLATION PARES TO 4.75% IN MAY

- Retail inflation eased to a 12-month low of 4.75% in May, down from April's figure of 4.83%, but higher than 4.31% recorded in May last year
- Inflation in the food basket was 8.69% in May, down from 8.70% in April, according to National Statistical Office data. The government has tasked the Reserve Bank of India to ensure inflation remains at 4%

4.5%

THE RESERVE BANK OF INDIA'S RETAIL INFLATION PROJECTION FOR 2024-25

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Close to 50 Indians dead in Kuwait building blaze

Most died due to suffocation; minister sent to oversee assistance

Video grab of smoke billowing after a fire broke out in a building in Mangaf, Kuwait, on Wednesday | PTI

INDIANS ADMITTED IN MULTIPLE HOSPITALS REPORTED STABLE

Over 30 Indians have been admitted at the Al-Adan hospital, six others at Farwaniya Hospital, 11 in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital and six in Jahra Hospital. They are said to be stable. "Another 6 are expected to be shifted to Jahra hospital today from the Mangaf site," the Indian mission wrote on X. The Emir of Kuwait assured full probe and accountablity

YESHI SELI @ New Delhi

CLOSE to 50 Indian are feared dead in a massive fire that broke out around dawn in Kuwait in a building housing nearly 200 foreign workers. Most of the victims were asleep and died due to suffocation, sources said. The fire started in a kitchen of a six-storey building in the Mangaf area, south of Kuwait City, which is densely populated with migrant labourers.

Most of the deceased were Indian nationals from Kerala, Tamil Nadu and elsewhere. Their ages ranged between 20 and 50 years. Major General Eid Al-Owaihan, head of the interior ministry's General Department of Criminal Evidence, was quoted as saying by *Arab Times*. "We received a report of a fire at 6 am," he added.

Given the scale of the tragedy, Prime Minister Narendra Modi sent the new Minister of State for External Affairs, K V Singh, to Kuwait to oversee assistance to all the affected people. "Minister Singh will also oversee the repatriation of mortal remains of those who have passed away in this tragic incident," according to the Ministry of External Affairs. Besides, Modi announces ex-gratia relief of ₹2 lakh to the families of deceased Indian nationals from Prime Minister Relief Fund.

The Non-Resident Tamils Welfare Department, too, opened two helplines. For calls within India: +91 1800 309 3793 and for calls from foreign countries: +91 80 6900 9900, +91 80 6900 9901.

India's Ambassador to Kuwait, Adarsh Sawaika, has been visiting those injured in various hospitals and extending all possible assistance. The embassy also set up a helpline.

"In connection with the tragic fire accident involving Indian workers today, the Embassy has put in place an emergency helpline number: +965-65505246. All concerned are requested to connect over this helpline for updates," the Indian Embassy in Kuwait said in a post on X.

Indians constitute 21% of Kuwait's population and 30% of its workforce. Interior minister Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef said the building's owner had been detained, adding any properties violating safety regulations would be closed immediately. "We will work to address the issue of labour overcrowding and neglect," he said.

PM Narendra Modi embraces Andhra CM N Chandrababu Naidu (right) during the oath-taking ceremony in Vijayawada on Wednesday | PRASANT NADUGULA

NAIDU LOGS IN AS CHIEF MINISTER OF AP

S VISWANATH @ Vijayawada

TELUGU Desam Party boss N Chandrababu Naidu was on Wednesday sworn-in as the chief minister of Andhra Pradesh for the fourth time in his four-decade-long political career in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union ministers Amit Shah, Nitin Gadkari, J P Nadda, and Bandi Sanjay besides a host of other NDA leaders. It was a star-studded event attended by film stars Rajinikanth and Chiranjeevi.

> Our government is committed to upholding the rights of the marginalised
>
> Chandrababu Naidu, Andhra Pradesh CM

Governor S Abdul Nazeer administered the oath of office and secrecy to Naidu and his 24 Cabinet colleagues, including Jana Sena Party chief Pawan Kalyan, at a grand event held in Kesarapalli on the outskirts of Vijayawada.

Besides 21 TDP MLAs, one BJP and three JSP legislators have been inducted into the new ministry.

Interestingly, even before the portfolios were announced, Amit Shah and Pawan Kalyan's brother Chiranjeevi took to X and congratulated the JSP chief for being appointed as the deputy chief minister.

Throughout the event, the camaraderie between Modi, Naidu, and Pawan was on full display, sending clear signals that the NDA partners stand united. PM Modi hugged Naidu soon after the latter took oath as Andhra chief minister. Flanked by Chiranjeevi and Pawan Kalyan on either side, Modi greeted the crowd.

Later, Modi also posed for photos with Naidu's family members. P5

Former Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik greets his successor Mohan Charan Majhi (left) during the swearing-in ceremony in Bhubaneswar on Wednesday | PTI

TEAM MOHAN TAKES CHARGE OF ODISHA

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bhubaneswar

ODISHA politics turned a new page on Wednesday with the BJP forming its first government in the state under the leadership of senior tribal leader Mohan Charan Majhi, who ended the 25-year rule of the Naveen Patnaik-led BJD.

> The hopes and aspirations of 4.5 crore Odia people will be fulfilled. BJP is committed to Odia asmita and Odia culture
>
> Mohan Charan Majhi, Odisha chief minister

Odisha Governor Raghubar Das administered the oath of office to Majhi, a four-time MLA from Keonjhar, in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, seven Union ministers, and nine chief ministers of BJP-ruled states. Patnaik was also in attendance.

Majhi became the 16th CM and third from the tribal community after Giridhar Gamang and Hemananda Biswal. The 16-member council of ministers headed by Majhi includes two deputy chief ministers – K V Singh Deo and Pravati Parida.

Eight ministers have been given cabinet rank. They are Suresh Pujari from Brajrajnagar, Rabinarayan Nayak from Kuchinda, Nityanada Gond from Umerkote, Krushna Chandra Patra from Dhenkanal, Prithviraj Harichandan from Chilika, Mukesh Mahaling from Loisinga, Bibhuti Bhusan Jena from Gopalpur, and Krishna Chandra Mahapatra from Morada.

The five ministers of state are Ganesh Ram Singkhuntia from Jashipur, Suryabanshi Suraj from Dhamnagar, Pradeep Bal Samanta from Sukinda, Gokulanada Mallik from Polsara, and Sampad Chandra Swain from Paradip. P5

Gangster Pujari beaten up over pro-Pak slogans

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Belagavi

NOTORIOUS gangster Jayesh Pujari was beaten up on the court premises here on Wednesday for allegedly raising pro-Pakistan slogans. Pujari, who is lodged at Hindalga central jail in Belagavi district, was brought to the court in connection with a case registered against him in 2018 for allegedly threatening the then Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) Alok Kumar.

While he was being brought to the court premises, he started shouting "Pakistan zindabad". This irked the people, including lawyers, on the court premises, who assaulted Pujari. Police, however, secured Pujari and took him to the APMC police station.

Last year, Pujari threatened Union minister Nitin Gadakari by calling his office and demanding that Rs 100 crore be paid to him. Convicted in a double-murder case, Pujari hails from Dakshina Kannada district. The reason for Pujari raising pro-Pakistan slogans is not known, the police said.

Sources, however, said Pujari allegedly raised the slogans as he was upset that his grievances were not addressed and he was allegedly not allowed to present his case before the court.

Police whisk away Jayesh Pujari from Belagavi court premises on Wednesday

4 offered ₹20L not to name Darshan, reveals probe

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

INVESTIGATIONS into the murder of Chitradurga pharmacy worker KS Renukaswamy, 33, in which actor Darshan and 12 others have been arrested, have revealed that the four accused, who had surrendered before the police, were offered Rs 20 lakh to ensure that the actor's name doesn't come up in the case.

From Saturday night till the body was dumped by the side of the stormwater drain near Sumanahalli bridge in the wee hours of Sunday, Rs 10 lakh was paid to two of the four accused. The four accused agreed to confess that they had murdered Renukaswamy after accepting the money offered to them. They worked for a firm engaged in seizing vehicles from loan defaulters. The firm has taken the land, where Renukaswamy was murdered in a shed, on lease, police sources said.

Deepak, one of the accused, is alleged to have given Rs 5 lakh each to Nikhil Naik and Keshavamurthy. As per the deal, the remaining amount of Rs 10 lakh was to be paid to the family members of Karthik alias Kappe and Raghavendra after they went to jail.

The four accused are alleged to have had WhatsApp conversations with Darshan from Saturday night till the body was disposed of. After they surrendered, the police seized their mobile phones. During interrogation, they disclosed Darshan's involvement in the murder. The police then checked the tower location and found the actor's phone active near the scene of crime, the sources said. CONTINUED ON: P5

Police take four of the accused for spot mahazar at the stormwater drain, where the victim's body was found, in Sumanahalli on Wednesday | VINOD KUMAR T

Sending explicit pictures & messages led to murder

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

SENDING explicit photographs and messages to actor Darshan's close acquaintance Pavithra Gowda is said to be the main reason for Renukaswamy's abduction and murder.

It is said that Renukaswamy, who believed that Pavithra was spoiling the family of his favourite actor, had allegedly sent pictures of his private parts to her, claiming that "he is no less than Darshan".

Pavithra had discussed this with her close aide Pawan and asked him not to reveal it to Darshan, fearing that he might harm Renukaswamy. Pawan, however, brought the matter to Darshan's notice after which Renukaswamy was murdered.

Social media accounts of the accused and the victim are being examined by the police. Renukaswamy is alleged to have been messaging her from different accounts when she kept blocking him. MORE: P3

ACTOR OR STAR, I WANT JUSTICE: VICTIM'S WIFE

Chitradurga: Renukaswamy's family was expecting a new member with the delivery date of his wife Sahana fixed three months hence. But now everything is dashed. "If my kid after coming to this world asks where her/his father is, what will I do? I am shattered. How can I lead my life now. Whether he is an actor (Darshan) or a star, I want justice," Sahana said | P3

EXPRESS READ

India enter Super 8 with 7-wicket win over USA

New York: India defeated USA by seven wickets to enter the Super Eight of the T20 World Cup here on Wednesday. Suryakumar made 50 off 49 balls and Shivam Dube 31 off 35 balls as India overhauled USA's 110/8 in 18.2 overs | P17

First session of the 18th Lok Sabha from June 24

New Delhi: The first session of the 18th Lok Sabha will begin on June 24, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said. President Droupadi Murmu will address a joint Parliamentary sitting on June 27. The session will end on July 3.

Jawan killed, 6 injured in 2 encounters in J&K

Jammu: A CRPF jawan was killed and six security personnel were injured in two overnight encounters with terrorists in Kathua and Doda districts of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Wednesday.

Modi to fly to Italy for G7 in first visit in 3rd term

YESHI SELI @ New Delhi

IN his first foreign visit after taking oath as prime minister for the third term, Narendra Modi will head to Italy on Thursday to take part in the 50th summit of the Group of Seven (G7) countries.

"India has been invited as an Outreach Country for the G7 Summit which begins on June 14th," foreign secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra said on Wednesday.

Modi will participate in the Outreach Session along with the other countries invited for this year's G7 Outreach Summit.

The focus points for the Outreach Summit are artificial intelligence, energy, Africa and the Mediterranean. It will be a block agenda item where the G7 and the outreach countries will share their views. This newspaper had reported on May 4 that if re-elected, Modi's first overseas visit as PM would be to Italy.

Kwatra said Modi's participation in the summit would provide an opportunity to follow up on the outcomes of the G20 Summit held under India's presidency last year.

Regarding India's position on Russia's war in Ukraine, expected to dominate discussions during the G7 summit, Kwatra said, "We have always maintained that dialogue and diplomacy is the best option".

During the visit, Modi is likely to hold a bilateral meeting with Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. "In the meeting, the two prime ministers are expected to review the entire gamut of bilateral ties and give directions for next steps," Kwatra said. Modi is also likely to have bilateral meetings with other leaders, he said.

This year's G7 Summit will be held in the luxury resort of Borgo Egnazia in Italy's Apulia region from June 13 to 15.

PM'S FIFTH G7 SUMMIT

This will be the 11th time India is participating in a G7 summit. For Prime Minister Narendra Modi, it will be his fifth consecutive participation. During last year's summit in Hiroshima he held talks with Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy

HC allows K'taka govt to extend HSRP deadline

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE state government on Wednesday informed the High Court of Karnataka that it is contemplating extending the deadline to fix High Security Registration Plates (HSRP) to old vehicles registered before April 1, 2019, till August or September.

Additional advocate general Vikram Huilgol made a submission before the division bench of Chief Justice NV Anjaria and Justice KV Aravind during the hearing of appeals filed by the HSRP Manufacturers' Association and others on fixing HSRP.

Recording the submission, the court granted liberty to the government to take a decision to extend the deadline by modifying the interim order passed on May 21. Huilgol submitted that the state is not in a position to extend the deadline because of the earlier order, which restrains it from taking any precipitative action till June 12. Hence, the court should modify the earlier order, he stated.